

REMARKS  
ON THE  
CONSEQUENCES OF THE ENTIRE CHANGE  
OF OUR  
COLONIAL POLICY  
IN  
BRITISH NORTH AMERICA.



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Au grand spectacle de l'ambition coloniale a succédé le spectacle de l'ambition manufacturière. — THIERS.

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## REMARKS, &c.

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IN giving a sketch of the present situation and prospects of the British North American Colonies, it is not my intention to discuss the principles of Free Trade, or to enter on the questions, as to whether the late measures of the British Legislature have been cautiously and prudently adopted, and the old-fashioned theory of ships, colonies, and commerce exploded by the more enlightened views of the present age; and whether the majority of the members of both Houses of Parliament, unbiassed by party feeling, has come to the calm and deliberate conviction that, as a great national measure for the general good of the empire, the theory of Free Trade ought to be adhered to, and all protection to the trade of the British Colonies be withdrawn.

It is sufficient for my purpose that the theory of Free Trade has been adopted; and the question now is, not whether that theory is or is not to be practically carried into effect, as regards the British North American Colonies; but the plain truth is—and it would be folly to disguise the fact—that if these Colonies are to remain part and portion of the British empire, no other choice is left than to retrace the precipitate measure lately adopted; or, if these Colonies are to enjoy no other privilege than mere military protection, then Free Trade must be carried out to the full extent; not the shadow without the reality. It is in vain to expect that mere special pleading, in the shape

of a colonial despatch, will convince the intelligent colonist that he does not know his own situation, but that he enjoys some wonderful advantage and privilege he is not aware of; while what he looks for as a matter of justice, is actual trade and intercourse with foreign countries, equally free and unshackled by all protection in favour of the British manufacturer, and of the British shipowner, as that enjoyed by the United States of America. The Governor-general of Canada, on 25th January, 1846, pointed out in strong terms to her Majesty's Government the evils that must arise from a sudden change of measures:—"That the improvement of the internal communication by water in Canada was undertaken on the strength of the advantage of exporting to England the surplus produce; that the means of the province to pay the principal and interest on the debt guaranteed by England would be diminished, and the general prosperity of the province so materially affected as to render it a possible case that the guarantee given to public creditors would have to be resorted to by them for the satisfaction of their claims." Mr. Bliss, the agent for New Brunswick, in a letter to Sir Robert Peel, of 28th January, 1846, states, that the effect of these measures would be "to hold out the strongest inducement that can arise from commercial considerations for these provinces to separate from the mother country and join the United States;" and the Legislature of Canada, on the 12th May, 1846, in still stronger language, that "It is much to be feared that, should the inhabitants of Canada, from the withdrawal of all protection to their products, find that they cannot successfully compete with their neighbours of the United States, in the only market open to them, they will naturally, and of necessity, begin to doubt whether remaining a portion of the British empire will be of that paramount advantage which they have hitherto found it to be; and that any changes which would tend in the remotest degree to weaken the ties that have for so many years, and under trying circumstances, bound the people of Canada to that land which

they are proud to call their mother country, would be viewed as the greatest misfortune that could befall them." To this, in despatches up to 3d June, 1846, Mr. Gladstone replies, refusing the petitioners, in terms sufficiently diffuse, and but little demonstrative, as I shall presently show, and concludes by stating that, "It would indeed be a source of great pain to her Majesty's Government if they could share in the impression, that the connexion between this country and Canada derived its vitality from no other source than from the exchange of commercial preference. If it were so, it might appear to be a relation consisting in the exchange, not of benefits but of burdens: if it were so, it would suggest the idea that the connexion itself had reached, or was about to reach, the legitimate term of its existence." It cannot be denied that such language savours much of an approaching separation of these Colonies from the mother country; yet it is notorious, that at no period was there less disposition on the part of the Canadian colonist to promote annexation to the United States, than previous to these Free Trade measures; and even now, taking the public press and the acts of the most influential public bodies as the means by which the wishes of the people may fairly be judged of, it is satisfactory to see that, from one end of that vast country to the other, the newspapers teem with expressions of loyalty and affection towards the mother country. The *Quebec Gazette*, in its usual clear and able manner, discusses the subject with calm prudence, and concludes by stating, "but true allegiance, like common honesty, never raises a question of interest as an excuse for its violation." The Boards of Trade of Quebec, of Montreal, and of Toronto, express the greatest confidence that justice will be done by the mother country; and the Montreal and Upper Canada papers, generally, disavow any wish or intention to contend against such measures as may be deemed to be indispensable for the benefit of the British empire at large; but what they, one and all, (or nearly all,) point out and insist on is, that these Colonies are placed in a



worse situation than the United States of America, in regard to free intercourse and trade with foreign nations, and at the same time are about to be deprived of all privileges whatever as Colonies, by their trade with Great Britain being placed on an equal footing with that of foreign states. Lord Grey, on 18th May, is reported to have said,—“ In our colonial empire we possessed friends and allies in every quarter of the globe: we had thus a large population in various parts of the world, possessing great natural resources, united heart and soul with us, ready to take part with us in all our conflicts; and thus we maintained, in each possession, a garrison of the CHEAPEST kind, whilst they gloried in the security of being an integral part of the greatest and most enlightened and most civilised nation on the face of the earth. They gloried—and he knew that they felt it as a glory—in calling themselves British subjects, and in having their interests and rights protected by the power of this country!” And this speech was widely circulated and warmly responded to in Canada; but in the same speech Lord Grey also said, “ Did they not all know, that jealousy, arising from that commercial dependence, had produced that American war, which ended in the loss of these extensive Colonies to the Crown of this country?” And this is equally true, and no less strongly felt in the Colonies; but something more than Parliamentary speeches, and fine-drawn sentimental despatches, is now required, to prevent the very same results, from the same causes as those described by Lord Grey; for, however loyal the Canadian colonist may be—however averse to annexation to the United States, or unable and unwilling at present to form a new Federal Government, independent of either country—yet forbearance has its limits; and it is contrary to human nature to expect that if the Canadian colonists are to be deprived of all protection, except mere military protection, and of all privileges as colonists, and placed in a worse situation than if Canada formed an independent foreign State, that even then, that under such circumstances, the colonists will rest perfectly



satisfied with the honour and glory of calling themselves British subjects.

I am aware that the leviathan of the British press, *The Times*, and other papers, supporters of the present Ministry in England, in remarking on Mr. Gladstone's despatches, have said, that "the Government coolly said, that it would not purchase remote subjection at the price of national starvation; that if the Canadas could not be retained but by the golden ties of monopoly, they were not worth keeping at all. We think the Government showed excellent sense in the answer. The only fear was, whether the Canadians would appreciate it, or pronounce at once for the alternative of a privileged trade, or petulant independence." But what has the result proved to be? Have the Canadians shown any inclination towards a "petulant independence?" On the contrary, the representatives of the trade of the colony have expressed the utmost reliance on the justice of the mother country, and the press has declared, that "Canada wants no buying or coaxing to maintain her friendship and connexion with England. All she wants is justice: she will never part with the mother country on account of Free Trade, but her trade must be free out and out." But it seems unfair towards these colonists, that, after having aided in dragging them into this situation they are now in—after having aided in reducing them to a situation where their commerce is less free than that of a foreign state—the British press appear to have left them to their fate.

It is true that the colonists wished to retain protection to their commerce; it is true that they endeavoured, in plain and strong terms, to point out the vast national importance they considered these Colonies to be of to the British empire, by the employment of so very large a proportion of the British shipping,\* and of British seamen; the immense

\* The official returns of British shipping, entered inwards at ports of the United Kingdom from Colonial ports, in the year 1845, give the tonnage as no less than 1,805,529 tons; while that of British shipping, from all other

extent to which British manufactures are imported into the North American Colonies, the official value of which exceeded three millions and a half sterling, during last year; and even the value and importance, eventually, of the very numerous and hardy race of seamen employed in the coasting trade, and in the fisheries of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward's Island, Labrador, and the Gulf of St. Lawrence. But having failed in their attempts to convince or to influence the British Government—having been refused further protection to their trade, or even an amelioration of their present difficulties, by the introduction of American produce during the ensuing three years, *via* Canada—the colonists now look for something more tangible than a mere peroration on what is expected of them as their duty towards the mother country. It is too late now to say to them, that a new light has shone forth, and that it has been discovered that they were in part right, and that the British shipping interests cannot be interfered with, but must be protected. The British colonist may, with great reason and justice, say to the mother country, Give us protection to our trade, or give us Free Trade; the one or the other, but do not place us in a situation where we are to have the disadvantage, without the advantage, of Free Trade; do not withdraw protection from these Colonies, and yet, by protection of more favoured interests, place us in a situation where our loyalty, and feelings of affection towards the mother country, must be palpably in contradiction to our commercial interests, on which the prosperity of our country and our welfare is so entirely dependent. If we are to be deprived of protection, give us Free Trade, as described by *The Times* of 9th May. “The intelligence of the Canadas,” says *The Times*, “repudiates the idea of Colonial leading-strings. It feels within itself the abiding power of British enterprise. It feels that in the vast

parts of the world, was only 2,289,744 tons, including steamers, the mail vessels making repeated voyages to the continent of Europe, and ships employed in the fisheries.

Colonial empire of North America—in the mighty lakes and broad rivers—there are resources which will never fail while the hand of man is strong, his heart bold, and his industry unflagging. Seeing and recognising these great advantages, Canada asks to be liberated from the thralldom of protection, and, on the fair terms of commercial reciprocity, and self-regulation, to compete in the markets of the British empire and the world.” I shall now endeavour to place in a clear point of view the present state and prospects of Canada, and make a few remarks on the unwarrantable and extraordinary misrepresentations with regard to the trade of Canada, which have been made use of for party purposes in England; and although I am very well aware that when startling truths are mentioned, and plain language used, doubt is immediately created as to the possibility of such a state of things, I will not be withheld from stating distinctly, and I shall endeavour to prove, that if the British Government have not exactly broken faith with the Canadian colonists, something approaching very near to this has taken place; and as the facts may be easily ascertained by any one who chooses to take the trouble, I cannot fancy it possible that any unprejudiced reasonable man, who does not mix up the question with party politics in England, will be found to deny that the colonists are hardly dealt with, and have reason to complain, and a right to expect and to demand protection, or trade with foreign countries equally free and unshackled as the trade enjoyed by the neighbouring States of America. In 1842-3 various alterations took place in the laws affecting the Canadas and other Colonies, and, amongst others, regulations with regard to the West India Colonies, which virtually did away with what had previously been a thriving and increasing trade, in the exportation of provisions from Canada; as it was found that, from the distance, and being restricted to British shipping, the Canadas could not enter into competition with the United States of America, in supplying the sister Colonies with beef, pork, &c., &c.;

and this created dissatisfaction, inasmuch as, while these West India Colonies were allowed to supply themselves from foreign countries to the detriment of Canada, yet Canada was not admitted to the same privilege in regard to the produce of these West India Colonies, but duties equal to about 30 per cent. *ad valorem* were retained, and continue so to this moment on sugar, rum, coffee, and cocoa—and nearly double this amount of duty on molasses, the produce of foreign States, when imported into Canada; let it be well understood, not provincial duties for the purposes of revenue, but Crown duties, laid on by the British Legislature for the purpose of protection to the British West India Colonies. Alterations likewise took place in the timber duties, which created great anxiety in Canada, and the colonists were urged to turn their minds to agriculture; and they were encouraged to believe that their colonial produce would enjoy certain privileges over foreign agricultural produce when imported into Britain, under the express proviso, however, that the Canadian Legislature passed an act, imposing a duty on foreign wheat when imported into Canada; and this being immediately complied with, the famous Canada Corn Bill of 1843 was passed by the British Legislature, which bears its meaning and intention on the face of it,—namely, “That whereas it is recited in the said act (of the Provincial Parliament,) that it was passed in the confident belief and expectation, that upon the imposition of a duty upon foreign wheat imported into the province, her Majesty would be graciously pleased to recommend to Parliament the removal or reduction of the duties on wheat, and wheat-flour, imported into the United Kingdom from Canada. And whereas, in consideration of the duty so imposed by the Legislature of Canada, it is expedient, &c. &c.” And the duty on wheat, &c., when imported into Britain from Canada, was reduced to 1s. a quarter. It would seem that this Act of Parliament is sufficiently explicit and distinct; yet the interpretation now used as an



excuse, appears to be, that Great Britain, in fact, has not withdrawn the privilege granted to Canada, and that, when promising to admit the agricultural produce of Canada on certain terms, she did not give any pledge that the produce of every foreign country would not be admitted on the same terms ! All I have to remark on the subject is, let any honourable man read the act, and the official correspondence, and then say, whether the whole transaction will honestly bear such a Jesuitical interpretation. Urged on to exert their energies in this direction, and under the sanction and guarantee of the British Government, a million and a half of money was borrowed by the Province of Canada to carry out these views, by the improvement of the inland navigation and communication ; and in perfect good faith and reliance on the mother country, and not for a moment supposing it to be possible that all protection would be withdrawn, even before it was possible to complete these works, so as to derive the benefit expected to arise from them, immense exertions were made ; enormous outlay took place ; and I believe I do not exaggerate in saying, that, in the spring of the year 1847, vessels of several hundred tons burden may load and proceed to sea from a distance of 1500 to 1600 miles inland ; and neither exertion nor expense have been spared to render the St. Lawrence the outlet for the produce of a very extensive, and very fine British American country. Under such circumstances, is it at all extraordinary if the Canadian colonists are dissatisfied to find themselves saddled with a heavy and ruinous debt, which the Governor-general of Canada had represented to her Majesty's Government that the purposed measures would much decrease their capacity to pay the interest or principal of, and that, eventually, recourse may be necessary to the British Government, as having guaranteed the loan. Is there any thing to be wondered at, if, having fulfilled their part of the implied contract, or at least the understanding come to, ere the money was borrowed and laid out, that they think it paid ; that they think it con-

trary to equity and justice to be deprived of the privileges implied by the British Act of Parliament 6 and 7 Vict., by the guarantee given by the British Government, and by the whole proceedings, and that protection to their trade be withdrawn, not from any fault of theirs, but from the tergiversation and want of foresight of British statesmen? I will show how little attention such assertions are entitled to as coming from an anonymous scribbler; but what says Lord Stanley, who had been the British Colonial minister? He protests, “Because the removal of differential duties in favour of Canada corn is at variance with the legislative encouragement held out to that colony by Parliament, *on the faith of which the colonists have laid out large sums upon the improvement of their internal navigation*”; and because the removal of protection will divert the traffic of the interior from the St. Lawrence, and the British ports of Quebec and Montreal, to the foreign port of New York; thus throwing out of employment a large amount of British shipping—severing the commercial interests of Canada from those of the parent country, and connecting these interests most immediately with the United States of America: Because the adoption of a similar system of commerce will tend to sever the strongest bonds of union between this country and her Colonies, will deprive the British merchant of what is now his most certain market, and sap the foundation of that colonial system, to which, commercially and politically, this country owes so much of its present greatness.”

I am well convinced that the Canadians would scout and scorn all idea of repudiation; but if ever there was a case where repudiation could be justified, the Canada loan approaches very near to it. The Canadian colonists are now told to retrace their steps, and to take off the duty laid on foreign wheat when imported into Canada, and which was laid on by desire of the British Government, and that, when they have done this, they will be allowed to enjoy the same advantages as the United States of America

in the British market, for their agricultural produce, and after a short time nothing more; but that they will be relieved from the duties exacted by the British Government for the protection of British manufactures, and of British colonial produce. It is all very fine, and very plausible, for embryo statesmen in the House of Commons to assert, that never was there a time when the Canadians could find so good a market for their produce all over Europe; but it is cruel and intolerable to hear such statements made on authority which may be supposed to have some weight, when the notorious fact was, or ought to have been, known, that it matters little to the colonists what is the state of the market on the continent of Europe. All the exertions they have used, all the money they have expended, are perfectly unavailing to enable them to reach the markets of the continent of Europe direct from Canada! The colonists are fettered and shackled by protection laws in favour of British interests, and by the British Navigation Laws, from the effect of which very nearly the whole continent of Europe is shut against their trade direct, and the ships of these foreign countries are prohibited from trading with Canada, because it is a British colony. And thus, while free trade is talked of, and nominally granted; while *The Times* proclaims that “the standard of Free Trade floats on the Castle of Quebec, if not as proudly, yet as hopelessly, as on the Custom-house of Liverpool, or the Exchange of Manchester,” the unfortunate colonists are, in fact, confined almost exclusively to Britain, as the only market in Europe where their produce is permitted to be imported direct from Canada: and they are prevented from supplying their wants direct from the cheapest markets in Europe, but are compelled to import the produce and manufactures of foreign countries in Europe by the indirect means of shipment to England, to be there bonded and transhipped by British ships to Canada, liable to all the delay, the immense difference of expense, and the vexatious obstruction and deterioration of the value of their property,



from the British Custom-house regulations, as I shall presently prove in detail. A considerable purchase of French manufactures was made in Paris, and there divided, and one-half thereof was sent to Liverpool to be there transhipped by British ships for Canada, and the other half was sent to Marseilles to be there shipped for Canada, *via* New York; and the result proved to be, that the expenses on the half of this purchase sent to Liverpool, when laid down there, and then liable to further shipping charges, and freight and insurance to Canada, amounted, as nearly as could be, to double the amount of the expense incurred on the other half when laid down, freight and charges included, at New York; and while at the British Custom-house, although these foreign manufactures were imported into, and exported from, the bonded warehouse, every article was taken out of every package, to the great injury and deterioration in the value of the property. The other half, shipped *via* New York, remained intact and uninjured. Other shipments from the continent of Europe met with the same fate, and some descriptions of goods were unpacked and weighed. Thus the indirect trade *via* Britain is rendered nearly impossible; and although the direct trade from the Continent is nominally not otherwise interdicted, it is rendered impossible by the British Navigation Laws; and the colonists are, of necessity, driven to the cheapest mode of conveyance, by American ships *via* New York.

I am aware that it may be said, that the expense of freight from Britain to Canada may be set off against the expense of conveyance from New York to Canada; but, notwithstanding Mr. Gladstone's doubts on the subject, the expense of transport from New York to Upper Canada does not exceed the expense from Montreal to the same place. The following is an extract from the table of duties levied on foreign manufactures and produce, when imported into the colonies under the British Act of Parliament, 8 & 9 Vict. cap. 83, those duties being for the protection of British manufactures and trade, and are over and above

what the same descriptions of British manufactures and produce are liable to, unless when foreign produce is imported from the bonded warehouse in Britain, when three-fourths of the extra duty only is exacted : —

Refined sugar 20 per cent.; glass manufactures, silk manufactures, spermaceti oils, skins, &c. 15 per cent. *ad valorem*; cotton manufactures, linen, woollen, leather, hardware, clocks, tobacco, soap, candles, corks, cordage, oakum, &c., 7 per cent. *ad valorem*; and these are a part of the duties which the colonists wish to get rid of, in such a way as not to be injurious to the colonial revenue. But this is not all : it is in vain to enable the colonists to equalise the duties on foreign manufactures and produce with the duties levied on British manufactures and produce, while, in fact, the colonists cannot export, even in a British ship, the products of Canada direct to the ports on the continent of Europe, nor can foreign ships trade with Canada; and, consequently, the colonists must inevitably resort to the British market alone for the sale of their produce, and are compelled to resort to the indirect route *via* Britain, or *via* New York, to supply themselves with such foreign manufactures as, under the new state of things, they find it to be a decided advantage to obtain from foreign countries, in preference to procuring them from Great Britain.\*

The American Government is well aware of the difficulties to which the British colonists are exposed, and the press of the United States ridicules the idea of the Cana-

\* It may appear somewhat extraordinary, to those who merely listen to all the extravagant representations on the subject of Free Trade, and the monopoly granted to the Colonies, that Canada was compelled to retain higher distinctive duties on foreign manufactures and produce, for the protection of British manufactures in her market, than the rate of distinctive duties allowed by the British Tariff in favour of Canadian manufactures in the British market. By the new Tariff of 1846, the duties on the cotton and woollen manufactures of the colony, when imported into Britain, are 5 per cent. *ad valorem*; and on linen, iron and steel, copper and brass, hair, and all other manufactures not otherwise enumerated, and paying duty, 10 per cent. being the same as from foreign countries.

dian entering into competition with the route *via* New York, while they remain under the trammels of British protection laws in favour of other British interests. The United States Government is using every possible means to draw the whole of the trade of the inland British and American country in the direction of New York, for the encouragement of American shipping, and of their own inland communications; and for this purpose every facility is given, and a Transit Law has been passed, giving great freedom to the foreign trade through the United States territories, the result of which has proved to be eminently successful, and promises to be more so.

The following extract, from the official paper at Washington, will show the object and effect of the United States Transit Acts, on undoubted authority, and more clearly than by any other means within my power:—

“We publish this day an important circular of the Treasury department, as regards the law of 8th August, 1846, allowing a transit through our rivers, railroads, and canals, of exports from Canada for foreign countries. The act of the 3d March last, allowing a drawback on foreign imports, exported from certain of our ports to Canada, and also to Santa Fe and Chihuahua in Mexico, has gone to some extent into effect under regulations prescribed by this department, and is beginning to produce the most happy results, especially in an augmented trade in the supply of foreign exports to Canada from our own ports. Indeed, this law must soon give to us the whole of this valuable trade, during the long period when the St. Lawrence is closed by ice, and a large proportion of it at all seasons. The result would be still more beneficial if Canada were allowed to carry all her exports to foreign nations, in transit, through our own railroads, rivers, and canals, to be shipped from our own ports. Such a system, while it would secure to us this valuable trade, would greatly enlarge the business in our rivers, lakes, railroads, and canals, as well as augment

our commerce; and would soon lead to the purchase, by Canada, not only of our foreign exports, but also, in many cases, of our domestic products and fabrics. In this manner our commercial relations with Canada would become more internal, and more and more of her trade, every year, would be secured to our people." On this subject, the *Toronto Colonist* remarks, that "It appears to be the desire of the legislators of the United States, to render their canals and public works as extensively serviceable as possible, not only for their own citizens, but for the citizens or subjects of the adjoining countries.

"Whatever changes our neighbours may introduce, there is an evident determination to adhere to the principle of protection, which is applied by them to their agricultural products as well as to their domestic manufactures. Whatever advantages our neighbours may be willing to concede to us, there is one which, however anxious we may be to obtain it, they are determined to withhold, viz. free access with our products to their markets, or access upon the payment of a moderate duty; which would not, in effect, exclude us altogether from them as at present. The high duty, amounting to prohibition, levied on colonial wheat and other products sent to the United States, our readers are familiar with."

The ultimate results of a Free Trade, such as the Canadas are fairly entitled to, if they are deprived of protection, may prove to be very different from what is anticipated in England; and if these Colonies are prevented supplying themselves direct from the cheapest markets, by protection to more favoured interests, a very large proportion of the trade must find its way by the cheapest mode of conveyance, that of American ships *via* New York. In Mr. Gladstone's despatch of the 3d June, 1846, it is stated, that "the price which the colonial and foreign exporters of corn respectively will obtain in Great Britain, must always be materially affected by the comparative degrees of facility which may be afforded to the country



of the one or of the other, for the introduction of those British goods by which payment of the corn must substantially be made. British goods are admitted into Canada at a very low, and into the American Union, at very high import duties. The effect of this is, not merely to give the British importer a better position in the Canadian market than in that of the United States, but to enable him to give a better price for the commodity he purchases in return, and therefore to give the corn trade of Canada a corresponding advantage, so long as the present Tariff continues, over that of the United States." But, why stop there? why prevent the colonist from carrying out, in regard to foreign countries, this theory so anxiously explained as being so beneficial to Great Britain? Is it to be taken as Mr. Gladstone's meaning, that this theory is applicable to the trade of Canada with Great Britain alone? In plain terms it appears to amount to this: the colonists are told to admit British manufactures at a low rate of duty, and that they will obtain a higher price for their produce when sent to England, than they otherwise would do; and that they will be permitted to admit foreign manufactures also at a low rate of duty; but that they must not go to foreign markets with their produce, so as to derive the benefit from having reduced the duties on these manufactures; they must not admit foreign vessels to import the produce of foreign countries into Canada, nor even to export the produce of that colony to Great Britain, for exportation from the bonded warehouse; they, the colonists, are not to have the same privilege a foreign country enjoys, even in this respect. The British Act of Parliament, 8 & 9 Vict. cap 88, sect. 22, says, "That goods of any sort, or the produce of any place not otherwise prohibited than by the Law of Navigation herein before contained, may be imported into the United Kingdom from any place in a British ship, and from any place, *not being a British possession*, in a foreign ship of any country, and however navigated, to be warehoused for exportation only, under the provisions of any law in force for the time being,

made for the warehousing of goods without the payment of duty, upon the first entry thereof." But the description of Free Trade which the colonists are to be permitted to enjoy, appears to amount to their agricultural produce being admitted into Great Britain by British ships only, and at the same rates of duty as foreign produce, and nothing more or less ; but they, as colonists, must abide by British protection laws, by which they are prevented from going elsewhere than to Britain, and trading with foreign countries direct, on equal terms with their neighbours of the United States of America ; and it is held out that these disadvantages will be counterbalanced by a lower tariff on British manufactures when imported into Canada, than that of the United States of America, and by advantages the colonists are said to possess over the United States. The advantages the Canadian colonists are represented to have over the United States are pointed out in Mr. Gladstone's despatch of 3d March, 1846,—viz. " Further, with regard to corn, I have much satisfaction in reflecting, that if Canada will have to enter into competition with the Western States of America, and to engage in this rivalry when no longer covered by any protective duty, at least she will not be called to make the effort without some advantages on her side. Among them I reckon her light taxation, the assistance she has received from British credit and funds in the construction and improvement of her internal communication, her more regular and steady course of trade with this country, her low tariff—so favourable to improvement, and, on that account, powerfully tending to encourage her reciprocal commerce outwards ; some advantage in point of proximity as compared with the most westerly states of the Union, which are also her most formidable rivals in cheapness of production ; and lastly, the means of conveyance, without transshipment, by the St. Lawrence, which cannot be had by the Erie Canal. She will likewise have this in her favour, that her corn trade will have become a settled one

of some standing, with all its arrangements made, while any regular commerce in that article, from the United States, must be a new creation, and must go through the process attending its self-adjustment to circumstances yet untried." And in a despatch of 3d June, 1846, that "Her Majesty's Government can by no means subscribe to the opinion, that the comparative dearness of this route, by the St. Lawrence, is an established fact." Now, I may be permitted to remark, that the British capitalist knows to his cost, and I presume it will not be denied, that the States of the American Union found no difficulty in obtaining ample credit and funds for the improvement of their internal communication; and the Canada Loan being guaranteed by the British Government, is merely a question of a small difference, if any, in the amount of interest of the debt payable by Canada. What is meant by "her more regular and steady course of trade," Heaven only knows! The United States of America have, for many years, enjoyed a regular and steady trade with Great Britain, and with the whole world, while Canada has virtually been confined to trade with Britain only, or nearly so; has had her trade tampered with at various periods, and now, palpably and evidently, is likely to have her trade with foreign states, and even with Great Britain, placed on a less favourable footing than the trade enjoyed by the United States of America. Lord Monteagle, on 11th August, is reported to have said, in reference to the Canada trade, that "The whole history of our legislation on this subject, during the last twenty years, had been nothing but a succession of changes;" so it was absurd to say that the House was "pledged to any thing." As to the low tariff, greater proximity, and cheapness of conveyance by the St. Lawrence, it is freely admitted that the American tariff is higher than that of Canada, as the revenue of the province is sufficient for the wants of the country, although the expenses of the local government have enormously increased since the Union; and the



American tariff is, in some degree, of a protective nature, as well as for the purpose of revenue. But the restrictions on the colonial trade, on the one hand, while unprotected, on the other hand, in any market, far more than counter-balance this advantage ; and, notwithstanding the immense improvement of the inland communication, notwithstanding that the St. Lawrence is evidently the natural outlet of such a magnificent country, colonial and American, the disadvantages and restrictions under which the colonists labour are such as to render a competition with their more favoured neighbours of the United States, in the trade with the rest of the world, impossible.

From the want of more solid argument, Mr. Gladstone may be driven to dwell on the greater proximity of a part of Canada, as compared to the most westerly states of the Union, and to express a doubt as to which is the cheapest route for the conveyance of the produce of these countries to a market in Europe. But plain facts may tend to place the matter in a different light, and in some degree to counteract the impression made by mere speculative ideas. The United States Government is so intent on securing the carrying trade for American shipping, and the conveyance of the products of the whole inland country by the American route *via* New York, and so great facilities have consequently been given by the Transit Act, that even at this moment, when some small difference in the duty remains in favour of the colonists, on their agricultural produce when imported into Great Britain, the very great disadvantages under which the Canadian route labours, has placed, as near as can be, on an equal footing in the Liverpool market, agricultural produce the growth of Canada, coming *via* the St. Lawrence, and American produce, the growth of the inland country, which would naturally come *via* the St. Lawrence, but is conveyed by the American route *via* New York. And such being the case at present, it is evident that, when the duties are entirely equalised in Britain, as they will be, then the Canadian colonist does

not enter into even-handed competition, but must struggle against the whole of the present difference, arising, in a great degree, from the difference in freight by British ships, which have the monopoly of the trade. But, as an example, in proof of what I have stated, an extensive Canada merchant, during last year, shipped largely of grain and flour to Great Britain from the interior of the country; and although these articles could be brought to Montreal at an equally cheap rate to that at which they could be conveyed to New York, he was induced to make his shipments from New York, because he there obtained freight to Liverpool at 5s. a quarter for grain, and 16s. a ton for flour, while at Montreal the freights were about 12s. a quarter for grain, and 46s. a ton for flour. And during the present year, up to the end of July 1846, although the comparison at this season of the year is far the most favourable to the United States, yet the freights from New York to Liverpool have been 5s. 3d. to 6s. a quarter for grain, and 16s. to 18s. a ton for flour; while at Montreal they have been 10s. to 10s. 6d. a quarter for grain, and 36s. to 48s. a ton for flour.

The moment the Americans found out that the British Government had the intention to abandon protection to the trade of the British Colonies, agents were sent into Upper Canada to contract for the conveyance to, and shipment of flour from New York for Liverpool, to be put on board free of all charges at New York, at precisely the same rate per barrel of flour as it would cost to be conveyed to Montreal. And at this moment, in so far as British regulations are concerned, and unless prevented by the new Free Trade Corn Law, grain may be imported from Canada into the United States, and there converted into flour, which, being conveyed to New York at a cheap rate, can be there shipped, by American ships, at a low rate of freight, to Great Britain, to any market in Europe, or to any part of the world. But American grain imported into Canada, even when the duty laid on by desire of the British Government is done away

with, when converted into flour in Canada, and then brought to Montreal, is there met by British protective restrictions, can only be shipped by British ships to Great Britain, and is almost totally excluded from the continent of Europe, in either a British or any other ship, because from Canada, a British colony. What, then, is the British colonist to do under such circumstances? Decrease the cost of conveyance! exert his energies, which are said to have been slumbering under protection! All fine talking, truly; but it must be remembered, that although the greatly improved inland communications give greater facilities on the Canada side than hitherto, yet the means of conveyance on the other side are equally cheap; and however much the colonists may exert their energies to have their produce conveyed at a cheap rate to Montreal, they have to do with cheaply constructed means of conveyance on the other side, and with a people equal in energy to themselves; a people who have a free trade with every part of the world from New York, and who, in even-handed competition with the British shipowner and British merchant, in the most hazardous and enterprising trade of the whale fisheries, have swept the British trade from off the sea. "The standard of Free Trade (says *The Times*) floats on the castle of Quebec." The true standard of Free Trade floats on the Pacific Ocean: and what is there to be seen,—what is it we see? the flag of the stars and stripes, with a British Union Jack few and far between. A different flag floats on the castle of Quebec; there it floats on the barren rock, fanned by the winter breeze, with the thermometer 40 degrees below zero, an apt emblem of the warmth with which it was sought for; and the colonist feels that the true standard of Free Trade was left behind when trade was free, when the British shipowner fled from the Pacific Ocean. What floats on the castle of Quebec is but a tattered shred, false colours to disguise a slave-ship, a deception to protect monopoly. The British colonists are gagged and fettered. Are they to be deprived of protection,

confined to the British market, compelled to the exclusive use of British shipping, and then told to exert their energies, that they enjoy Free Trade? But such language is foreign to my purpose, and, perhaps, partakes a little too much of the magniloquent effusions of some of the Free Trade papers in England; but is there any exaggeration of the facts? *The Times* city article of the 5th of September gives the following:—"We have been given to understand that only four ships have arrived from the southern whale fishery this year; the estimated loss by the owners of these four ships will exceed £20,000, and none of them have been refitted for the service. It is stated that a proposition was made to the Government more than twelve months since, to revive this important branch of shipping, but it does not appear that the application was successful. Manufacturers and consumers, under these circumstances, must be dependent for the future on the United States of America, for a supply of spermaceti oil." And at another period *The Times* states: "The last statistical accounts presented to Congress give the following figures as the amount of the mercantile tonnage of the United States in 1845; total tonnage, 2,417,002 tons. From the United States, on the 1st of April 1845, 691 vessels were engaged in the whale fishery, and the number of seamen and petty officers engaged in this important branch of navigation is not far short of 20,000, because the crews of whalers are unusually large in proportion to the size of the vessel, from the nature of their service, and the necessity of manning the boats so employed in the pursuit of whales. If we turn to the last reports of our own whale fisheries, we shall find a very different result, the suppression of bounties, and the reduction of duties on vegetable oils, having impaired the trade to the last degree. In 1821, 322 ships and 12,788 men were engaged in the British whale fisheries; in 1841, these numbers had fallen to 85 ships and 3008 men. It is not easy to discover why a trade which attracts large and increasing investments of American capital, should prove in so declin-



ing a condition in British hands. If 20,000 American seamen are at this time engaged in the whale fishery, principally in the Pacific Ocean, the United States may justly rely on such a body of men as a most excellent nucleus of maritime power. They have all the peculiar qualifications which best fit a seaman for the service of a man of war, whether on board the ships of the commonwealth, or under the flag of a privateer."

Thus one link of the chain of Free Trade appears to have snapped asunder, and now the defeated party stares in astonishment and looks for the cause, in the reduction of duties on vegetable oils, and the suppression of bounties ; hints at the revival of the trade by Government measures ; failing which, "the British manufacturer and consumer must depend on the United States of America." I have, however, some reason to believe, that *The Times* was more unwilling than unable to give another, and probably the true reason for this disastrous defeat of British enterprise ; but, be this as it may, the fact is clearly admitted, that some time or other, the British shipowner has knocked under, and has been completely defeated by a foreign nation on his own element ; and, quoting from the same authority, from which *The Times* derived its information in part, "The Americans have at least four-fifths of the whale fishery of the world ; and not the less remarkable part of it is, that the oil, when arrived in America, is nearly all exported to England."

Is this then an accidental circumstance, or is it, as it has been said to be, owing to the superior energy, order, and temperance to be found on board American shipping ? I shall not, however, attempt to discuss this subject further ; but I may be permitted to remark, that the British mercantile shipping has not increased in proportion to the population, nor in proportion to that of other nations. Take any trade open to free competition ; take the Baltic trade, to which greater encouragement is now to be given, and while the Free Traders are exulting over the rapid

increase during the last three years, it will be found that somewhat more than the whole increase in the trade has taken place entirely by foreign shipping. Take the port of London for the first six months of the present year 1846, as compared with the year 1845, and it will be found that two-thirds of the increased commerce is by foreign ships. The latest accounts from Odessa report, that out of 150 sail of ships taking freights of corn, only six were British, the others Sardinian and Greek. The latter power shows a striking instance of rapid expansion; the mercantile shipping being now pretty nearly in proportion as 20,000 now is to 3000 some fifteen or twenty years since. I have not, however, the slightest intention to contest the great principles of Free Trade; on the contrary, I am willing to admit Lord Grey's definition, that England is "the greatest, the most enlightened, and the most civilised country in the face of the earth," and that Free Trade is a very beautiful theory. When Mr. Huskisson, the father of Free Trade, some years since proposed a change in the trade of the Canadas, I had occasion to know the precise terms in which his views were explained to a deputation of the colonists; and they were assured, that it was far from being intended to create a revolution in the trade of the Canadas, to the destruction of those who had invested their capital therein; that they might with entire confidence rest satisfied, that their local interests would be carefully and cautiously dealt with. But, in so far as the Canadas are now concerned, I cannot admit that the British senate has acted up to this declaration of Mr. Huskisson. I cannot admit that the representatives of this great empire have showed any excessive degree of consistency and of wisdom, as a pattern for the colonial legislature to follow. I cannot admit that over half a dozen members of either House of Parliament have attempted to explain, and much less to render clear, how this theory of Free Trade is to be carried out to its full extent, without the total subversion of all connexion with Canada as a British colony; but I do freely admit,

that the interests of Canada appear to have been very imperfectly represented, and in some instances very grossly misrepresented; and that the little interest and debate this part of the great question of Free Trade appeared to create in the House of Commons, arose in all human probability from a very great state of ignorance of the subject.

All that I pretend to say is, that one of two systems must now be adopted, as, if Great Britain has decided on not giving protection, beyond mere military protection to Canada, "as a garrison of the cheapest kind," and that a nominal Free Trade is to be granted in compensation, by which colonial interests will be placed on the same footing with those of foreign countries, while at the same time protective restrictions are retained in favour of British interests, then the inevitable consequence must be, that the colonies will not long remain such, and had better be given up on amicable terms, as Lord Ashburton, on the 11th August is reported to have said, "The question whether we were to have Colonies at all was involved in the question of Free Trade or Protection. Protection had sometimes been carried to a ridiculous extent; but it was essentially required, and it formed a necessary part of that system under which this country had acquired greater wealth, perhaps, than any other, the results of ships, colonies, and commerce. The principles advocated by the noble earl would involve the loss of the Colonies. The system of reciprocal protection was the system of Colonies, and they would cease to be of any value the moment we deprived them entirely of the system of protection. Was it intended to give to the Colonies the power of removing all restriction? were they to be at liberty to trade where they pleased, in what bottoms they pleased, and to have the entire and unrestricted Free Trade which we claim for ourselves, and which it was said would produce such benefits to every one? He asked whether we ought to throw down our defences and to let in all the world, and whether any such system could be found in such a country as this to answer? Was every



body, then, to be allowed to carry their manufactures to Jamaica and Canada on the same terms as we receive them ourselves? If that were the case, gentlemen in Manchester, who expected such great benefits from Free Trade, would discover that in their own favourite article of cotton, the monopoly of which they conceived no one could take from them, they would be defeated in some of the Colonies. It would then be a question whether it would be worth while to keep our Colonies to benefit all the world, at a great expense to the revenue, with a great increase of our establishments, and entailing upon us certain weakness and feebleness, if the time should come when we should be unfortunately called upon to defend ourselves at home. The country would be placed in a false position by this system; *and if the principle was adopted at all, it must be carried further.*" And now, as the parties arrive at nearly the same result, although from very different premises, let us look at the opposite side of the question as taken by *The Edinburgh Review* of July, on the subject of colonial protection: — "And not only do they create the necessity for larger military and naval establishments in the time of peace, but they involve us in wars to which otherwise we should not be exposed. Beyond the very questionable benefit of apparent power, (which may lead to jealousy as well as fear,) we derive no advantage from the mere supremacy over remote provinces; from our being able to say that the Queen of England has so many millions of subjects, and that her dominions include so many thousand square miles; that the sun never sets on the British empire; that the English language is spoken in every clime, and that the flag of England floats in every latitude. That we do, however, in the present state of the world, derive much substantial advantage from our Colonies, cannot be doubted; but that advantage, it appears to us, consists not in the barren attribute of sovereignty, but principally in the facilities which they afford for commercial intercourse. Even Napoleon, however accustomed as he

was to look at every thing as a general, and not as a civil governor, was captivated by the commercial prospects of Colonies; and constantly associated with them the ideas of a mercantile marine, and an extension of external trade. In what, however, do the commercial advantages of colonial possessions consist? They consist simply, as it seems to us, in the power which the mother country thereby enjoys of securing a fair and open market to her goods. They consist in her power of preventing the colony from excluding her from its markets, by restrictions and discriminating duties, and all the perverse follies which the union of national jealousy with false systems of political economy has engendered.

“ If the colony were independent, it would, supposing it to understand its true interest, admit the goods of the mother country upon the same terms of equality as it does when dependent. It would do voluntarily what it now does under compulsion. But looking to the established errors on the subject of trade, to their general currency, and to the strength and spaciousness of the prejudices with which they are associated, we may be certain that such would *not* be its conduct. The following is, in few words, a summary of the principles upon which the relation of England to her Colonies, especially with reference to the colonial trade, ought, in our opinion, to be regulated:—It should be constantly borne in mind, that each colony is a separate and distinct community, occupying a territory distant from England, though politically dependent upon the Imperial Government. Owing to this separateness and remoteness, its local and subordinate government ought to be conducted as much in accordance with the opinions and wishes of the inhabitants, as is compatible with the condition of political dependence, and the maintenance of the supremacy of the British crown. For the expenses of its military and naval defence, England must not expect any direct compensation. Nor *ought she to subject the trade of the colony to any restrictions for her own exclusive advan-*

*tage.* She ought to assume no preference in the markets of the colony, and should rest contented with the establishment of a perfect Free Trade on both sides. She ought to permit her colony to trade freely with all the world, and open her own ports to its products. But, on the other hand, she ought not to sacrifice her own interests, by levying at home discriminating duties for the supposed benefit of the colony ; a system of fiscal privilege which excludes cheaper and better foreign goods from her own market, and gives just offence to foreign nations."

It appears, then, that the two very opposite authorities I have quoted, both of which may be considered as entitled to some weight, have come to the conclusion, that if Free Trade is to be adopted, it cannot stop short at nominal Free Trade, but in fact must be free intercourse and trade with all the world. It perhaps, however, may seem to be somewhat problematical, whether *The Edinburgh Review* has not laboured so hard to point out what the use of Colonies would be, when deprived of protection to their trade, as pretty nearly to show, that they would be of no use at all, but rather an encumbrance. But it has been said, that the British colonists will enjoy Free Trade, in as much as they may build ships for themselves, which will be entitled to all the privileges of British bottoms. This, however, is fallacious in more ways than one : although it is true that the colonists are allowed to build ships and to export their produce to Britain by this means, yet their ships are prevented from direct intercourse with the continent of Europe, because from a British colony ; and nine months have not passed over their heads since the British colonists were threatened with, and had difficulty in preventing, a duty being laid on colonial built ships, for the protection of the British shipowner ! And while it is evident, and the best answer to the absurd misrepresentations that have taken place on the subject, that the trade and conveyance of agricultural produce by the river and gulf of St. Lawrence, requires substantial well built ships, well and sufficiently equipped and manned,

to accomplish so intricate and dangerous a navigation, the colonist must labour under all the disadvantages of having the navigation of the St. Lawrence shut for five months of the year; they must struggle against the more open and easy navigation from New York, coupled with the great facilities given by the American Government to that route, and the low rates of freight by American shipping, and their being confined to the British market, while all the world is open to the Americans. In the timber trade, and especially for timber when manufactured into deals, the colonists are under great disadvantages as compared with the British shipowner, and they cannot enter into competition with the description of vessels used for the conveyance of deals from some of the northern States of Europe,—absolute baskets, with their crews fed on rusk and stock-fish,—which are so rapidly doing away with the trade in British ships, although those ships have the advantage, not possessed by those of Canada, of being near and at hand, thus benefiting by the short voyage as occasion may offer, when otherwise unemployed.

Two great questions will soon be mooted: one is, Shall the entire navigation of the St. Lawrence be thrown open to all nations, or only by sea to Quebec and Montreal? and the other is, If the British Navigation Laws are retained, shall they be extended to the lakes of Canada? But on neither of these questions is it my intention to enter at present. It is evident that the colonists are at this moment paralysed. A sudden, astounding, and complete change of British colonial policy has taken place; they perceive the disadvantages under which they will be placed, yet they are anxious to adhere to such regulations as the British Government may deem to be indispensable for the general good of the empire, and to show their loyalty and affection towards the mother country; they wish to avoid being drawn or driven into a closer connexion with the United States of America, than is consistent with the interests of friendly nations, in civilised countries, bordering on each



other ; and it does not appear clear that the colonists have yet had sufficient time, calmly and deliberately to come to a decision on the unparalleled and intricate state in which their magnificent country is now to be placed. The question of the opening of the *entire* navigation of the St. Lawrence to all nations, is of too vast importance to be hastily gone into, as touching chords which, when made to vibrate, may involve the peace, not only of America, but of the whole world ; and perhaps the extension, eventually, of the British Navigation Laws to the lakes in Canada, would create jealousy and difficulty of a nature to be avoided. The navigation of the inland waters, however, can at this moment scarcely be said to be on the basis of reciprocity, as the advantages and restrictions are on the American side.\*

\* Free Trade,—from Messrs. Gibson and Ord's circular, Manchester, 22d October, 1846. "A struggle has been maintained between buyer and seller, the former seeing no prospect of *remuneration in the foreign market but from low prices*, whilst the latter has had to contend with almost daily increased rates for the raw material. A remedy for *both* can only be found in a reduction of the time of labour, at once giving confidence to the exporter and a check to speculation in cotton. We are happy to say that such a movement is now more than probable, for already several mills in this district have commenced running short time. A curtailment of the hours of labour necessarily increases the cost of production ; and the calculation by our manufacturers has usually been, and, we know, now is with many, whether the loss, at the ruling prices, is greater than would be the case in running their machinery on reduced time. But we would beg leave to remind them that their calculation should not stop here, but embrace the prejudicial effects produced on foreign markets by a glut of goods, thrown on them by over-production, as was the case in 1838 and 1842, by which an almost unparalleled state of depression and suffering was mainly brought on in this district. Our view is, that if a *system of four days' work per week* were universally adopted, our home market would at once assume a tone of firmness, and the foreign be so relieved and strengthened, that we would, after the winter months had passed, be enabled to return to full work with brighter prospects. The course we are advocating is greatly strengthened by the position and prospects of the cotton market ; for assuredly, unless some means are taken to decrease consumption, a further enhancement in the value must take place," &c. A circular of this highly respectable firm is, no doubt, excellent authority as to the state of the manufacturing interest in Manchester, and the statement appears fully to be borne out by combinations in a great many of the manufacturing towns in England. It

No one well acquainted with Canada will deny that these questions must and will be mooted; and I fear there are few such persons, who, if they choose to speak out, will not admit their entire conviction that matters cannot remain as they are; and that, unless more be done than is at present proposed, the British North American Colonies will not remain such: they must have protection to some extent, or they must have Free Trade. The people are loyal and well inclined towards the mother country; but it is contrary to the nature of things that they will long remain the coerced children of an unnatural mother. I shall now enter into some details, and show the absurdity of some of the misrepresentations with regard to the Canada trade, which have been made use of for party purposes in England; and that, in many instances, just so

does not appear clear how the curtailment of the hours of labour necessarily increases the cost of production, in the sense in which the proposed decrease seems about to take place; as, unless the Manchester manufacturers mean to pay their workmen for six days, while working only four days, they are pretty much in the same situation as the landowner, who must submit to a decreased rent, or interest of his money, by throwing out of cultivation his land, if he finds that he cannot advantageously do otherwise.

The fruits of Free Trade were to be, greatly increased consumption of manufactures, abundance of employment for labour, and no decrease in wages. But, in so far as things have gone, it would seem that the manufacturers have not sufficient faith in their own theory to go on manufacturing to meet what was represented by them as to be the inevitable consequences of Free Trade; but, on the contrary, the system now to be adopted is, to reduce the labour employed in manufactures no less than one-third, that is, to four days in the week. If the British colonists are to have a trade fettered with such restrictions as I have pointed out, in favour of British interests, it must be evident that they will feel more rapidly, and in a much greater degree than foreign countries, this combination of the British manufacturers; in as much as it must be borne in mind, that although decreased production and increased price of British manufactures will tend to relieve foreign markets at present glutted, it is evident that in the same proportion must foreign manufactures be encouraged in these markets; thus giving foreign states a palpable and evident advantage over British colonies, where foreign manufactures are not permitted freely to be imported direct, but are liable to the expense, delay, and deterioration in value, arising from indirect communication with foreign countries.

much of the truth has come out, as to give a false colouring to, and an erroneous idea of the facts. First in order come Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Gladstone; and the former is reported to have said, amidst the uproarious applause of the British senate, "that he was ashamed to read the ship-owner's petition against further rash experiments in the reduction of the duties on foreign timber;" and to have stated, that these duties were reduced in 1842, yet, that "concurrently with the reductions that have taken place, there has been an enormous increase in the quantity of Canada timber introduced; and why?" And then the honourable gentleman goes on to answer his own question, by stating that the reason is, "The access to the good timber of the Baltic tending to increase manufacturing prosperity, and with it the demand for that Canadian timber, which did not come into competition with the Baltic." Now, this gratuitous explanation, or rather assertion, as to the reason why the quantity of Canadian timber had increased, may do very well to elicit "Hear, hear! and applause." Yet, is it true? is it an established fact, that such was really the cause of the increased importation of Canadian timber? Is it not a fact that the accidental and unforeseen, but enormous extension of railroads and their accessories, has absorbed more than the increased quantities of Canadian and of foreign timber imported? Even Mr. Gladstone, who labours hard to make out that relaxation in our commercial law has had something to do with it, admits, in a despatch of the 3d of June, 1846, "that the importation of timber from British North America into this country, attained last year to a height which it had never reached under the more protective laws. I do not mean, that the withdrawal of protection was either the exclusive, or the direct cause of this prosperity. Increased demand has, without doubt, been the main and immediate cause of the increased export of wood from British North America." But it has been well said, that perhaps Mr. Gladstone and Sir Robert Peel would be rather at a loss



to show, that the trade of the North American colonies, and that enjoyed by British shipping, would not have had a more rapid increase *without* the withdrawal of protection, to which they refer. That increased demand was the immediate cause of increased importation, there can be no question ; but that a tendency to manufacturing prosperity has been created to such a degree by access to the good timber of the Baltic, as to be the cause of the increased importation of Canadian timber, it would be difficult to show a plausible reason for believing ; and the more so, as at the very moment when the minister of the crown was making this assertion, the red pine of Canada, of which the importation is very great, was selling under his very nose in the London market, at equal, and even higher prices than what could be obtained for the far-famed good timber of the Baltic, so much has been said about. It is not generally known, because few people will take the trouble to go into the detail, that the real reason of so much being said as to the inferior quality of the Canadian timber and deals, is, that the British consumer makes use of the cheapest description of Canada timber, in place of taking the higher-priced and best, which he can also obtain of Canadian growth ; but it would cost him quite as much, and is of equal, if not superior quality to the best Baltic wood. I very well know, that such an assertion will be scouted and derided by those who know little about the matter ; and I confess that Sir Robert Peel is powerful authority, seemingly. Nevertheless, the fact is so ! as there certainly is no better quality of pine timber imported from the Baltic, than the red pine imported from Canada. I cannot describe its quality more completely, than by quoting from a *Free Trade* writer in *The Times*. “ The Baltic produces nothing like it ; it is tough, clean, durable, clear of sap, obtained in any length required, and is more free from defects than any other timber with which I am acquainted.” But, while the red pine timber of Canada is so very superior in quality, the white pine timber and

spruce deals of Canada, are also good of their kind, but are of much less value, and not at all calculated for many purposes, to which they are applied in England, because they are cheap; although they are superior to the red pine for very many purposes to which they are suitable.

The colonists furnish two descriptions of wood, the one cheap, and the other dear, but both good of their kind. They cannot, however, insist on the British consumer not using the cheaper description, for purposes to which it is not well adapted, nor can they guarantee that no fraud be committed in Britain after the wood has quitted their hands; but what the colonists do, is to put it in the power of every one who imports timber or deals from Canada, to ascertain the quantity and quality of what he purchases, if he chooses to do so; and this by the certificates of sworn cutters and measurers, who are under very strict regulations under authority of the Canadian legislature. But the colonists cannot follow their timber to the British market; they can no more guarantee that white pine shall not be sold under the general name of Canada timber, but for purposes for which it is not at all suitable, than the wine-growers of Bordeaux and of Porto can prevent the *vin ordinaire* of France being manufactured and sold in England as claret, or a mixture of logwood and black-strap as genuine port wine.\*

\* When shipping a bottle of good light Bordeaux at a cheap rate, the Free Trader dilates with much complacency on the great advantages that would arise from an increased intercourse and trade with France, and above all, that the labouring man in England, who now drinks beer and ale, would then enjoy a more wholesome beverage. That an increased trade would be advantageous, there can be no manner of doubt, provided that any thing in the shape of reciprocity existed, by the admission into France of British products or manufactures; but that the British consumers of beer and ale would be induced to bring into general use in England the execrable trash they would be furnished with, under the name of wine, or that such would prove to be a beverage equally wholesome as beer or ale, is utterly denied. Let any unprejudiced man visit the north of France, and the whole coast, until he come near to Bordeaux, and he will find, not only that the common wine is execrably bad, but that the numerous British labourers employed on the railroads, in a great degree refuse it, and drink

Strange as it may appear to be, it is no less true, that while the British authorities are thus giving an erroneous idea of the produce of the British colonies—and it is even said that large contracts have been made for the delivery to

brandy, longing for good wholesome ale. And those who have resided in the eastern parts of France, well know that servants, natives of Britain, are generally discontented with an allowance of the wine of the country. It may, perhaps, be questioned, whether brandy distilled from bad wine is preferable to British spirits, or rum distilled from sugar or grain; and the object of the decrease in the duty on brandy to 15s. seems not to be very clear, as not likely to diminish smuggling, nor to bring brandy to a price within the reach of the poor man. The utter gullibility of John Bull, with regard to wine, is absolutely beyond belief; and I am well convinced, that nine-tenths of those who may read what I am about to write, will not believe a word of it, although perfectly true. In England, the palmy days of genuine old port appears to have passed away, and I confess a sympathetic feeling of regret with those of the old school, on this subject. But in England not one in a thousand would believe, were I to state the proportion of brandy they swallow, while drinking the port wine of the present day. It is in vain to hold up the pellucid liquor, with a slight touch of bees-wing, smack the lips, and, Not a drop of brandy in this! There is scarcely such a thing known as unbrandied port; and the quantity in common port wine is beyond what I will venture to mention.

But who will believe, that in France and in Spain much port wine is manufactured to meet the British market! It is made of Benecarlo, and other Spanish wines, mixed with the wines of the south of France, and reinforced with a large proportion of brandy, and these being properly coloured, it is shipped in pipes made on purpose, so as exactly to resemble port pipes, which are different from the casks in which the wines of France and of Spain are shipped. I have myself seen very large quantities of wine thus made up, not as port wine, but avowedly and openly as imitation port wine, to suit the British market.

It is a notorious fact, that in the United States of America and Great Britain, double the quantity of wine is drank as Champagne, than is actually produced in the country, for the supply of the whole world. Genuine claret is yet to be had; but if any one wishes to ascertain what the reason is of the existence of so much bad claret, and the deterioration in the quality of the pleasant light Bordeaux red wines, let him take a trip from Bordeaux to the north of France by the Languedoc canal. And sherry! It would, I am aware, be in vain to attempt to convince the British public that all sherries are brandied, and that an immense proportion of the common sherry imported into Britain is manufactured abroad, from other wines: not sherry at all, but doctored with an enormous proportion of brandy, to suit the British market. Some of the most delicious wines are to be found in Spain and in Portugal; and I am not aware of their having been fairly tried in England, probably from not bearing doctoring, and being too delicate to bear carriage without it. I dare say many a British officer can speak to the qualities of

the Government of gun stocks, &c. from foreign countries, which would be obtained of at least equally good quality from the British American Colonies—yet foreign states are more alive to the true value of the produce of these colonies; and if they are not to retain any degree of protection to their trade, Free Trade may bring about events at present little dreamt of. A colonial ship, loaded in Canada, cannot be admitted into any French port without an express order from the French Government; yet the French Government have actually resorted to those British North American Colonies, for the description of timber which can be got there better than any where else; and there can be no manner of doubt the arsenals of France would be abundantly supplied, if these Colonies had, in fact, Free Trade. I now come to the most provoking, as being the most un-

Colares wine, near Cintra, and to other wines no less worthy of note. The most wholesome, and certainly the least adulterated, red wines, are those of the south of Spain, which have but little flavour, but considerable body, and which are never exported without from four to eight gallons of brandy to the pipe, but generally with little other adulteration; and this is very much less than the wines of Portugal generally. I do not mean to say, that the common wines of the west of France are more adulterated and brandied than the other wines I have mentioned,—in fact, they are perhaps less so, inasmuch as it would be difficult to find any abominable trash of less value, unless mere colouring matter, to adulterate them with; and let Free Trade and reciprocity take place when it will, there cannot be the slightest chance of the mass of the people of England acquiring so depraved a taste, as to prefer the acid mixture, and thin beverage of this part of France, to good wholesome ale. Now, if the British wine-merchant imports fabricated wines, knowing them to be such, and then sells these wines as port, claret, or sherry, at prices for which, in fact, genuine wines cannot be imported, and the British consumer purchases these mixtures under the names of the genuine wines of the countries from whence they are imported, it is clear that the good names of the wines of such countries must suffer; and it even does not appear at all clear that the extensive wine-dealer in France or in Spain, who sells hundreds of pipes of imitation port wine, openly and avowedly as an imitation, is more morally wrong than the British manufacturer, who sells hundreds of yards of imitation Brussels lace, or any other such articles.

The same reasoning applies, with even greater force, to Canada timber when it comes out of the colonists' hands. There is no deception in the description of its quality, but it may be sold in England the one quality in place of the other, the cheaper being substituted for the dearer.



warranted and most unexpected misrepresentations as to the Canada trade, and which are contained in a speech reported to have been made in the House of Commons, by Mr. C. Buller. An anonymous writer has, perhaps, no right to expect that credence which will be given to assertions made by a gentleman who may be supposed to have possessed a knowledge of what he was talking about, from his having held an official situation in Canada; but the facts are open to every body; and I may mention, that the speech, as reported to have been made by Mr. C. Buller, was shown to contain utterly incorrect statements as to the trade of Canada, on the authority, amongst many others, of a gentleman of high standing, who has passed the greater part of his life in Canada, who is a member of her Majesty's Council there, and whose name was mentioned in the debate in the House of Commons. But the evil was done; the impression was made. Colonial interests are very imperfectly represented in England; and, when the whole truth comes to light, it is only from persons in some way or other connected with Canada, who are immediately set down as interested parties; and notwithstanding the contradiction of the statements made by the honourable gentleman, his speech has been quoted, and harped on, as if excellent authority, and true as the gospel. Mr. C. Buller is reported to have said, that he was induced to make some remarks on the colonial bearings of the question, by the circumstance of his former relations with Canada, and proceeds to say, that "The timber came entirely from the province of Lower Canada, with one exception,—the right bank of the Ottawa river; the province of Canada West had no interest whatever in the question. He found, in a despatch from the late Lord Sydenham, writing from Kingston, he said, 'As to the timber trade, there is not a soul in this town who has any interest in the question.'" Now, I do not at all mean to deny that this may have been the extent of the information obtained by the honourable gentleman, during his relations with Canada, but it is too bad

to have such assertions made, on such authority, in the British House of Commons, while any one well acquainted with the timber trade in Canada, could have informed Mr. C. Buller, that at least two-thirds of the timber exported to Britain is from Canada West. It is difficult, therefore, to conceive how Canada West is now stated to have "no interest whatever in the question;" and it is an undeniable fact, that at the very moment when Lord Sydenham wrote the despatch, now so eagerly laid hold of, the Mayor of Kingston, the capital of Canada West, from whence it was dated, was very extensively concerned in the trade in timber from Canada West, and a large proportion of the mercantile population were more or less so. Mr. C. Buller said, "The fact was, in consequence of protection, the Canadians sent all their abominably bad timber to England; timber so bad, that many persons felt the bad effects of it when they hoped to lie quietly in bed. Every one who knew any thing of the timber trade was well aware, that the Canadians sent all their worst timber to this country, and all their good timber to the United States." As to the quality of the Canada timber, I have already pointed out, that people who know no more about the matter than Mr. C. Buller appears to do, are apt to believe that every description of Canadian timber is bad, merely because the consumers in England make use of the lowest-priced quality, for purposes for which it is unfit; and every one who knows any thing of the timber trade, is well aware that the best timber is sent to England, that a heavy duty is levied on the importation of Canadian products into the United States, and that the trade in that direction is in a great degree confined to boards and lumber. "The shipping trade, (says Mr. C. Buller,) was a scandal to the country: the ships sent out were old crazy vessels, imperfectly manned. He had seen the crews of some, consisting of runaway, disorderly seamen." When 1600 or 1700 sail of ships load within six months of the year, and upwards of 20,000 seamen are employed, and rum is cheap from the

West Indies, it is not very extraordinary to be able to see some disorderly seamen; but the ships are the same as employed in the coal, the cotton, and the guano trades; and a very considerable portion of them being from Hull, Newcastle, and the northern ports, they are generally manned by as hardy and fine a body of seamen as any within the British empire; and it is scarcely necessary for me to remark on the absurdity of supposing that the trade of Canada, by the intricate and dangerous navigation of the gulf and river St. Lawrence, which is shut by the ice for five months of the year, could be carried on by shipping a disgrace to the country, old crazy vessels imperfectly manned. The incredulous on this subject may easily satisfy their own minds, and will, I doubt not, attain a pretty strong degree of conviction, by an excursion in such a ship, and so manned, up the gulf and river St. Lawrence, in spring or autumn. Mr. C. Buller goes on: "There never was a time in which Canadian timber was more likely to enjoy a good market than that which was now approaching. All over the continent of Europe it would be extensively required for the formation of railways; the soft wood of the United States was nearly exhausted; Nature herself had provided the Canadians with a prominent market, and therefore the imperial legislature need not prevent the people of England getting timber from their neighbours on the shores of the Baltic." But supposing the statement to be true, (and it is not true,) that the whole of the timber is furnished by Lower Canada, and that "Canada West has no interest whatever in the question," it would puzzle the Canadians to find out in what way their timber is to be conveyed to the United States, the market Nature herself is represented as having provided for them, unless by sea! The Canada timber may be extensively required for the formation of railways, for foreign dockyards, and other important purposes, all over the continent of Europe, but it is necessary to find out how it is to get there.

I have already explained that British North American products are in fact virtually shut out from nearly the whole continent of Europe, by the effect of British laws for the protection of more favoured interests. I admit, however, that the soft wood or pine timber of the United States is nearly exhausted, and that, notwithstanding the United States territories extend over many hundreds of millions of acres of public land, that the pine timber, to which easy access can be had on such lands, is nearly exhausted. Indeed, I have under my view at this moment a very minute Report on the state of the forests within the American Union, made previous to the Ashburton treaty, and wherein it is pointed out that the magnificent and extensive forests in the valleys of the Aroostook and the St. John's, are far the most valuable of any within the United States. But these forests have been ceded to the commonwealth; and by the provisions of the same treaty the timber is allowed to be imported into Great Britain on the same terms as Canadian timber; which rather extraordinary concession has, however, virtually been nullified, or nearly so, by an Act of the provincial legislature. When the Commissioners, appointed by the British Government, made their Report, stating that they had found the range of hills indicated by the treaty of 1783, and that the British Government had a clear right to the whole of the territory in dispute, I did all within my power, and made public in various ways, the very great importance of these forests, and of what Sir Robert Peel is reported to have termed "a few acres of swamp" nearer to the Canada line; and also the great importance of Rouse's Point, as commanding the entrance of the Lake Champlain from Canada, at a very short distance from Montreal; and that, to give up the whole with the idea of peace at any price, in comparison to the value to Britain of the territory in dispute, would inevitably be considered in America as weakness, and followed by further difficulty and aggression on the part of the United States, and for which the continuance of the line west of



the Rocky Mountains would form ample grounds and excuse, if not settled at the same time as the North East Boundary Line. Some knowledge of the American character, and of the subject, led to this conclusion, and I do not take any credit to myself for having foreseen what has since occurred. It is amusing and instructive to hear this treaty lauded in England as a most wise and just measure, while in fact numerous British subjects, quietly settled under authority of the British Government, were turned over to the United States of America. But in Great Britain there is but a faint idea of nature, on the grand scale of the broad rivers and magnificent forests of America. A late writer, some time Governor in Canada, has remarked with much truth, that "however deeply prejudiced an Englishman may be in favour of his own country, yet I think it impossible for him to cross the Atlantic without admitting that, in the New World, nature has not only outlined her works on a large scale, but has painted the whole picture with brighter and more costly colours than she used in delineating and in beautifying the Old World. The heavens of America appear infinitely higher—the sky bluer—the clouds whiter—the air fresher—the cold intenser—the thunder is louder—the lightning is vividder—the wind is stronger—the rain heavier—the mountains are higher—the rivers larger—the forests bigger—and the plains broader; in short, the gigantic features of the New World seem to correspond very wonderfully with the increased locomotive powers and other brilliant discoveries which have lately been developed to mankind." Yet I have heard a very influential member of the British House of Commons, supposed to be well informed on the subject, talk of what was given up by the British as merely a valley—that of the Aroostook—dreaming perhaps of a valley such as may be found in England or Wales; but this valley of the Aroostook is now an extensive American county, covered in part with the finest forests within the American Union, and is capable of containing a population far greater than that of

Wales, and with infinitely superior land, part of which has been sold for thirty fold the value it was supposed to be of in England ; and the consequences of the line of boundary adopted are now showing themselves, inasmuch as the difficulty of forming a railroad,\* and securing a safe communication with the Canadas, is infinitely increased, and the

\* Since writing the above, I have heard, from pretty good authority, that the engineering difficulties of a railroad from Quebec, to communicate with the British provinces on the sea-coast, would be by no means great, and the advantages of such an outlet and connexion of the provinces, in time of peace, cannot be too highly estimated. Its utility, in case of war, may be more questionable, as, in consequence of the Ashburton treaty, it must approach inconveniently close to the frontier of a foreign nation, and could be easily cut off when the nature of the country and the extent of the line of road renders it impossible for it to be protected. A British colonist examines with much curiosity the different systems of railroad legislation pursued in England and on the continent of Europe. In England it appears that railroads, being a matter of mere private speculation, when a body of men see a prospect of making money, so much power and influence is thrown into the scale as to counterbalance all other interests or considerations, and the weaker parties, whose property is cut up, and who are injured in an irreparable way, are overwhelmed by the expense and difficulties of opposing what, after all, does not seem for the public benefit, as has too often proved to be the case ; and these lines of railroad are granted in perpetuity and without any provision for a decreased rate of fares and more advantageous arrangement for the public at a future period. In France, the main lines of railroad are carefully and deliberately taken into consideration and examined by the Government, and then the right of forming the railroad is granted to an individual, or to an association, for a certain fixed term of years, at the expiry of which the railroad becomes the property of the Government, and must be delivered over at that time in good working condition, with all its appendages. It would thus appear, that while in England, fifty or sixty years hence, the public will be liable to the same rates of conveyance as at present, and competition cannot be much extended without cutting up the whole country in a fearful manner, in France, at the end of sixty years, which is about the extreme term for which the great lines of railroad are granted, the Government of France will have it in its power, either to enable the public to benefit by the expenses of the communications by railroad being reduced to the mere actual cost of working the locomotive power, or an enormous revenue will be acquired, by which the taxation of the country may be much reduced. If French enterprise has proved sufficiently great, and much British capital has been invested in railroads in France, constructed under grants of this nature, it seems at least questionable whether British enterprise would not have accepted of the same terms for the construction of railroads in England, and with results favourable to the interests of the public and of the British empire at large.

Americans have, as it was easy to foresee they would do, voted a large sum of money for the purpose of fortifying Rouse's Point, which was ceded to them, although north of the line 45 . lat., fixed by the former treaty. While Canada is thus cramped in every way, her trade confined to Great Britain, and her communication by railroad rendered difficult, even with the other British provinces, by the length and expense of the road, and by the large debt incurred for the improvement of her inland communication, her neighbours of the United States are in the enjoyment of perfectly Free Trade by sea with the whole world, and are straining every nerve to draw the whole trade of the inland country, American and Canadian, by means of their canals and railroads, to their own sea-board, to be exported by their own shipping. The Mayor of Boston, in a late address, states, that "Five years ago, Boston had comparatively no back country; now, nine hundred miles of New England railroads centre here—she is on the high road between Europe and the west. The car that leaves our city this morning may deposit its merchandise, in thirty-six hours, on the shores of Lake Erie, five hundred miles from the place of departure; from thence, inland, seas, navigable for vessels of the largest class, stretch away for hundreds of miles, along shores fertile for agriculture and rich in minerals; canals already connect these lakes with the Mississippi and with the navigable waters of her tributaries, which, extending thousands of miles, communicate with shores of unrivalled fertility." But, to return to my subject. During the same debate, in the House of Commons, Mr. Warburton is reported to have said, "It became this country to consider whether it were a wise measure of national policy to drive away the trade of a country having so great a mercantile navy as Norway had, and to prevent her vessels trading to our ports; could they, by adopting such a course, depend upon securing the services of the Norwegian seamen at the time of danger?"—Hear! hear! hear!

Now this, although mere clap-trap, has a serious influence

on a subject of which so little is understood, and appears to partake in no small degree of the fallacies of the age we live in. It assumes, that at the time of danger, these Norwegian seamen certainly are to enter the British, and not the French, or the American navy, where they would receive nearly double the amount of pay. Ask the first man you meet with in England how it came about that we were beat in many naval actions by the Americans during the last war, and the answer invariably will be found to be, that they had larger ships, and these were manned by British seamen; yet, in all the discussions as to the pay of our seamen being so much less than that of the American navy, then, indeed, it is said, British seamen will not serve against their country! \* But what national feeling would prevent these Norwegian seamen from serving in the American navy against Great Britain, in case of war? or even if they were to enter the British navy as mercenaries, are they preferable to the so-called disorderly British seamen employed in the timber trade of Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, or to the very numerous and hardy race of seamen employed in the coasting trade, and in the British fisheries of Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward's Island, Gaské, Labrador, and the Gulf of St. Lawrence? But what is the fact with regard to the

\* Is not one great cause of the Royal Navy not being a popular service, that the pay of seamen is less than in the merchant service? Is not every man in Britain eventually liable to serve in the militia, although not his trade or profession?

Would it be an equally great hardship for every sailor to be liable eventually to serve in the Royal Navy, when, by doing so, he is following his profession and line of life? Under the new regulations with regard to merchant seamen, would it not be practicable to have of them, as of the militia, a certain portion liable to be called upon to serve eventually in the Royal Navy? If the pay of the seamen in the Royal Navy was equal to that of the merchant service, would there be any great degree of hardship in the contingent being called on, even in time of peace, to serve in the Royal Navy for a certain fixed period? Would not such be a means of inducing many of the men, when well treated, to remain in the Royal Navy, and of doing away with the prejudice, which probably had its origin in the press-gang and compulsory service.



Baltic trade? Have Norwegian vessels been prevented from trading to our ports? I believe I am correct in stating, that the British tonnage employed in the Baltic trade in the years 1831, 1832, and 1833, was in proportion as 370 tons of British is to 1000 tons of foreign shipping; while in 1841, 1842, and 1843, the British tonnage so employed had decreased so much in proportion to the foreign shipping, so as only to be as 290 British is to 1000 foreign; and while the employment of British shipping in the Baltic trade has continued to decrease, yet, at the very moment when the honourable member was making these remarks in the House of Commons, an enormous increase had taken place in the number of foreign vessels so employed; to such an extraordinary extent, indeed, that while little over 600 ships were so employed in 1842, the number of foreign vessels engaged in the Baltic trade to Great Britain in 1845 amounted to about 1900, navigated by about 17,000 foreign seamen. Mr. Warburton is reported to have said, that "the average quantity of European timber imported in 1841 and 1842 was 560,675 loads; in 1845 it had increased to 675,840 loads; and that in 1841 and 1842 the price of hewn foreign timber was 46s.; in 1845 it was 53s.; and foreign deals were in 1841 and 1842, 57s. 52s. and 55s. as the average, whilst in 1845 it was 66s. Therefore all the anticipations that were formed by the representatives of the shipping interest and the colonies when this matter was discussed in 1842, had been wholly falsified." But is this so? Is it a fact that the anticipations of the shipowners and colonists have been wholly falsified? I have already showed that not only has the whole of the increased quantity of foreign timber been imported in foreign vessels, but that the number of foreign seamen thus employed has increased from about 6000 in 1842, up to 17,000 in 1845; while an actual and continued decrease in British shipping has taken place. But it appears very problematical what benefit the British consumer of Baltic wood has derived from the British shipowner having thus been driven out of the Baltic trade; as,

according to Mr. Warburton's statement, in place of a decrease in the price in foreign timber, the consumer has had to pay an increased price, the difference going into the pockets of the foreigner, and for timber which, after all that has been said about it, is found to be no better, and not to bear a higher, if so high a price in the London market, as the corresponding description of timber imported from our own Colonies by British ships; and under these circumstances a further encouragement has been given to this trade from the Baltic.

It signifies little what the anticipations of parties were in 1842. The results in 1846 have palpably proved to be, that the quantities of foreign timber, and of timber manufactured into deals, have increased. The British consumer has not benefited by a decrease, but has rather had to pay an increased price. British shipping have very nearly been driven out of the trade; and the extension of British shipping, and the employment of British seamen, has been checked by a class of foreign vessels navigated by foreign seamen, at an expense with which the British shipowner feebly contends: and it has been proved by the best of all arguments, the actual price that the timber is worth in the London market, that an equally good quality of timber could have been furnished by our own Colonies, and which would have been imported by British ships.

I am well aware that when a great principle has been adopted for the general good of the empire at large, there may be great difficulty in carrying it into effect without severely pressing on local interests, and that much of what I have said may at once be set aside on this plea; and although I believe few people will be tempted to wade through, or give much weight to the details of an anonymous writer, I have been tempted to give the whole truth, not disguising what may not suit my own views of the case, and under the entire conviction in my own mind, not formed on light grounds, but with some knowledge of the people and of the subject, that if the British North American

Colonies are considered to be a valuable part of the British empire, which it is desirable to retain, the time has come when great caution and prudence must be used, or they will certainly be lost to Great Britain. Canada, from time to time, has had her difficulties—arising, I sincerely believe, in the first instance, from a constitutional government having been given to a people unaccustomed to it—who did not wish for, nor were they at that time at all prepared to receive it; and out of this mistake arose many of the subsequent evils. But Canada has been a happy country, and has prospered in a wonderful degree under British rule. The population at the time of the conquest, some 80 years since, I believe, did not exceed 60,000, and now may be taken as, at least, 1,500,000; and notwithstanding what has been said of the energies of the Canadians slumbering under protection, perhaps in no part of the world, not even in the United States of America, does there exist a country where the population, civilisation, and improvement in every shape, have progressed in so rapid a degree as in Upper Canada. What the result of Free Trade may prove to be, I very much doubt if any man can form a just idea; but it seems to be very evident that the Canadians cannot reasonably and equitably be expected to enter into competition with their enterprising neighbours of the United States, unless their commerce and intercourse with the whole world be rendered equally unrestricted with that enjoyed by the United States, or, that a degree of protection be retained equivalent to the restrictions under which they are to remain.

I am no advocate for the American people as a nation; on the contrary, I am inclined to believe that their unprincipled conduct in repudiation, slavery over half the Union, in the teeth of everlasting declamation on the rights of man, and grasping at an extension of territory by every means, whether from the Indian natives of the country, or from neighbouring foreign states, will tend much to dissolve the present Union at no very distant period, if no circumstance

occurs to create a national feeling against a foreign power. There is something captivating in the kind-hearted, joyous, and hospitable inhabitant of Lower Canada, in the midst of his family, with his snug comfortable white cottage, and his garden, as compared with his republican neighbour, and pretty considerable of a smart man, the Yankee, with whom he has no kindred feeling or wish to fraternise more closely; and in the upper part of Canada, when Sir F. Head fearlessly threw himself into the arms of the people, to protect their country against republicanism and American sympathy, they responded nobly to his confidence, and gave the most convincing proofs of their attachment to British institutions and to the mother country. But while the population of Canada is thus loyal and well-disposed, the curse of that fine country has been the change of governors, and the new line of policy adopted by each being in contradiction to that of his predecessor, and not unfrequently accompanied by intrigues of every description, to bring about by such means the new measures of the new men! The union of the provinces was notoriously thus managed: responsible government was suggested by one governor, rejected by another, and held out as a bait by a third; while Lord John Russell, in despatch of 14th October, 1839, on this subject stated, that "I have to instruct you, however, to refuse all explanation which may be interpreted to imply an acquiescence in the petitions and addresses on this subject;" and after going on at great length to give the reasons why he "sees insuperable objections to the principle thus stated," and showing it to be incompatible with the government of a colony, at least in the year 1846, Canada finds herself on the eve of having once more a new governor, and with a responsible government, which is interpreted to mean a something, any thing, every thing, and nothing! Mr. Roebuck is represented to have said in the House of Commons, that the representatives of Lower Canada at a former period had no desire for protection to the timber trade, and that now, "It was the English, Scotch,



and Irish merchants who had embarked their capital in a favourable trade, supported as they believed by protection, and who, the moment it was proposed to do justice to the people of the country by the adoption of Free Trade, threatened this country with republicanism and annexation. Foreign nations could not import their produce into Canada, nor receive the produce of Canada, in the cheapest and most direct way. But throw open the trade, and they would be satisfied." Few public men have had the experience and the opportunity of having such good information with regard to Canadian affairs as Mr. Roebuck, and there is perhaps some justice in the assertion, that the British merchants who have fixed their residence, and invested their capital in Canada, represent a large proportion of the trade, and are therefore the parties who feel themselves most aggrieved by the sudden and violent change of policy now adopted towards that country ; but the assertion as to a threat of republicanism and annexation, is merely one of those party effusions so common in Britain, so vexatious to the colonists, and from which their interests have suffered severely. There are now very many natives of Canada deeply interested in the trade of the colony, and who have large capitals at stake ; and although the representatives of Lower Canada were willing, at a former period, to rely more on their agricultural produce, if allowed to be imported freely into Britain, and exported to the other parts of the world, let it be borne in mind that this fine country was, some years since, visited by severe and distressing misfortune, and, if I mistake not, Mr. Roebuck himself, in the House of Commons, stated that the wheat crops in the Lower province had for years been completely annihilated all over the lower districts of the country by the fly, while the potato crop also suffered ; and, up to the moment at which I write, the evil continues to exist to a frightful extent, although with diminished intensity. There can be little doubt but that precisely the districts of Lower Canada which have suffered the most

severely from this scourge—by the destruction of their wheat crops—will be the first to feel and suffer the most severely from the new timber regulations in Britain. If a certain degree of protection is to be retained for some time in the British market in favour of hewn timber, it becomes a question as to the extent to which that part of the timber trade will be confined, or done away with. But it is not so with regard to timber manufactured into deals in Canada; and more particularly in regard to spruce deals, the greater part of which are furnished by the Canadian landowners, and the saw mills in these districts of Lower Canada, as even under the duties of 1842, and previous to the present alteration, it had become evident, that it was with difficulty the Canadians could obtain conveyance for this description of property to Britain, at rates to meet and contend with the ships of Northern States in Europe.

It has been asserted in England, that the trade in hewn timber did not tend to the improvement and cultivation of the country for agricultural purposes; and this is true to a certain extent, although the facts, as usual, have been ridiculously exaggerated; but this is not applicable to the trade in deals, and especially to deals from more lower districts of Canada, as not only are these large and valuable establishments formed by mill-owners, and by landowners, but, all over the face of the country, there are small mills, where the lesser Canadian proprietor cuts up his spare timber, while he clears his land for cultivation. In England much is said about how much more beneficially the Canadian would be employed in agricultural pursuits; but here, during a winter extending over six months of the year, the Lower Canadian cuts his spruce and other timber, and brings it to his mill in the snow, and when the hot sun, in spring, increases the stream, he manufactures his timber into deals, while there is yet many feet of snow on the ground, and he cannot employ himself in agricultural pursuits. Deprive him of this resource—deprive the less wealthy landowner, where

land is so subdivided and the proprietors so numerous, of the employment they derive from the larger mill-owners during the winter months, and their situation, under the pressure of circumstances, must become wretched indeed, unless they are providentially relieved from the heavy and afflicting visitation from which their wheat crops have suffered so severely. In dwelling on the details of the present state of the trade of Canada, I have not wished to enter on the great national question. It is not within my province to attempt to discuss whether Free Trade is a beautiful theory, well calculated to supersede the old system of ships, colonies, and commerce; but I have endeavoured to show the effect this theory would have if carried partially into effect, and that it is impossible for two countries, divided from each other by a mere boundary line along the land, the people on either side of which are possessed of equal energy and enterprise, to enter into commercial rivalry, or to prosper in an equal degree, while one of them has free intercourse with the whole world, and the other enjoys no such advantage, nor any other privilege equal thereto. I do not disguise from myself, that when I have stated my conviction, that these Colonies will not long remain such, under the circumstances in which they seem about to be placed, it may be said, that this means a threat of annexation, &c.; but believing, as I certainly do, that the North American Colonies are not only loyal, and well-inclined towards Great Britain, but that they would rather attempt a Federal Union of these Provinces, than consent to submit to annexation to the United States of America, it is in vain determinately to shut the eyes to the fact, that the United States, as Colonies, were equally loyal, until driven from the mother country by vexatious mercantile regulations. And, while I fully grant that these Colonies must bend to the general good of the empire, it seems unreasonable to expect that they will rest satisfied with mere military protection, if their

intercourse with Great Britain and with the world is to be placed in a worse situation than that enjoyed by the neighbouring States of America, as I have attempted to prove must be the case, if the Free Trade theory is carried partially into effect, as at present proposed. It may be asked, of what use is mere military protection to these Colonies, and the only quarter from which they have to dread danger is the United States. But to the Canadas, if unconnected with Great Britain, there is little danger of such an event as war, while the United States hang together as they now do. And had a war taken place on the Oregon question, there can be no manner of doubt but that the British North American Colonies would then, as they had hitherto done, have exhibited a spirit and energy showing how utterly they have been belied when any idea of their wish for annexation has been entertained. The consequences to Great Britain, of the annexation of these provinces to the United States of America, I presume to think, would be far greater than many people in England have at all taken into their serious consideration, not only as depriving Great Britain of an immense and certain resource for the employment of her shipping, which she may have occasion for, if other nations do not enter into Free Trade as well as herself; but while Britain would thus be shut out from the whole continent of North America eventually, the consequences to the United States in every way, would be even more than proportionately great. The power and territory of that country, although much more extended, would then be much more compact, while, with a sea-coast from Mexico to Hudson's Bay, and with her mercantile navy and number of seamen enormously increased by the addition of Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, with their trade and fisheries, the United States having already no less than 2,417,002 tons of shipping, would in a short time rival any power in the world. The North American colonists have heard that the Corn Law



League, and all-powerful manufacturing interests, have convinced the first minister of the British Crown, that all he had done hitherto, as regards the Colonies, has been entirely wrong. It appears that the League has been the moving power in obtaining Free Trade in corn to answer their own purposes; and it has been declared by Mr. Cobden, the head of this powerful body, that the prosperity the country will enjoy, when the principle of free intercourse is established, will be such as "suffice to drag the world in her wake." Now, it can scarcely be supposed that what has had so powerful an influence on the minister of the Crown of England, shall have no effect on the colonists, whose interests are so deeply concerned, who did not ask for, did not wish for, Free Trade. If they are nevertheless to be deprived of protection, they have no other alternative than to accept of Free Trade, but it must be free intercourse and trade with the world. May it not be well for the British legislature calmly and deliberately to take into its consideration the state of the Navigation Law, while it is yet time, and ere a new crisis take place; the hint has already been given by the Manchester manufacturers, in a memorial to Her Majesty's Treasury on the subject of the Navigation Laws—"That for many years past the impossibility of retaining them against the United States of America, and subsequently against several other nations, was admitted, and specific relaxations decreed by the legislature; but the wise policy, adopted in the last Session of Parliament, calls, in the opinion of your memorialists, for the immediate reform, or abolition of them, as against all the world."

Would it not, then, be more gracious, would it not be more prudent and just, to grant to the British North American Colonies, what cannot long be withheld from them, if protection be entirely withdrawn from the trade of that portion of the empire? Nay, in sober sadness, and with deep regret I say, if these Colonies are no longer considered to be a valuable part of the British empire,—

if by the purposed measures, as I have endeavoured to show, they will be placed in a worse situation in regard to their trade than if they already formed a foreign country, might it not be for the interest and advantage of Great Britain, and of these Colonies, to part on amicable terms, and allow them to attempt to form an Independent Federal Government as Foreign States, rather than to hold them in thralldom for the interests of Britain alone, until separated by violence, the necessary and inevitable consequence of this policy? \*

\* *Maize and Wheat*—At a time like the present, when want and famine threaten many parts of Europe, it may not be uninteresting to know the ordinary resources of the United States of America ; and I give a statement of the crops of wheat and of Indian corn, (maize,) as estimated on official authority, during last year—

1844—Wheat, 95,607,000 bushels.      Corn or maize, 421,953,000 bushels.

1845—    „    105,548,000    „      Corn or maize, 417,899,000    „

It is absurd, and even wicked, to represent the resources of the United States of America as fabulous, merely because the increased importation of flour from thence up to this time, as compared with the year 1845, has not yet been more than some 700,000 barrels, and the quantities of wheat and of maize are not so great as was expected. Let it be borne in mind, that not one bushel of wheat or of maize was raised, with any idea or expectation of finding a market in Britain, and that the first hint of any such resource was given long after the harvest, when Sir Robert Peel, in the spirit of ignorance, or of disingenuousness, made the discovery, that maize might be imported, as *an excellent food for animals*. In the States of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Tennessee, Missouri, and Alabama, the quantity of maize produced last year was no less than 216,709,000 bushels, and the quantity in these States, and in all the States of the Union, may be enormously and very rapidly increased. The public lands of these six States are no less than 97,347,172 acres, and, while the uncultivated lands of the other States may be said to be almost unlimited in quantity, it may be at least very doubtful, whether the low price of cotton, and the great demand and increased price of maize, may not induce on the cultivated lands, an immense decrease in the cultivation of the one, and increased production of the other.

What the consequences may prove to be in Britain, it would be in vain to speculate on, but there may be some hazard in the experiment, if the population of a country, reduced to feed on the lowest description of food they can raise, and being deprived of this food, are to be habitually accustomed to rely on the cheapest description of food that can be found any where, but no part of which can be raised in Britain, owing to the climate.

The total amount of grain, on which duty was paid, to 5th September, 1845, was 773,513 qrs. and of meal and flour 267,785 cwt.

The total amount of grain on which duty was paid to 5th September, 1846, was 3,043,505 qrs. and of meal and flour 2,905,252 cwt.

The total amount of bacon, beef, and hams, in 1845, 96,526 cwt. In 1846, 185,447 cwt.

That such is the case, as to the value, there can be no manner of doubt ; indeed, in point of fact, Indian meal, previous to the famine demand, was as near as can be one half the price of oatmeal in Ireland and in Scotland. That is, it was in the Liverpool market 307 per 480 lbs. while oatmeal was 307 per 240 lbs. ; and as this yielded a remunerating price to the exporter from America, it is only owing to the accidental famine price of this description of food, that maize has not fallen rather than risen in price ; and it may be well to mention, that the produce of an acre of land under maize is out of all kind of proportion infinitely greater than a crop of oats, barley, or rye.

